

know they do, agree with the direction that we've taken in the last 8 years.

About two-thirds of the people support what we're trying to do. They just can't bring themselves to vote for us in an election. [Laughter] That's the truth. That's the truth. And so this is very important, because I've worked as hard as I could to get the country turned around. It's been 50 years since we've paid down the debt 3 years in a row. If we keep going—if we keep going, in somewhere between 9 and 12 years, depending on what judgments are made by my successors in the Congress and the White House, America could be out of debt for the first time since 1835. And I can't tell you what that means.

In a global economy where we compete for every dollar with people all over the world and where, so far, we've been doing so much better than everybody else—we keep buying more than we're selling—to pay that debt off guarantees a whole—all these young people here, we'll give them 20 years of lower interest rates, a stronger economy, higher productivity, a whole different future. That's just one example.

So I'm going to try to be a good citizen, and I'm going to try to help work on the things that I worked on as President as a private citizen but to do it in a way that doesn't get under foot of the next President. And I have loved doing this. But the most important thing is that people like you stay active in our party and keep pushing us to be thinking about tomorrow. Just keep pushing us toward the future, keep moving, and keep reaching out like a magnet.

And again, I would like to thank Ben. I would like to thank Bob Kerrey for the 8 years that we have worked together, President and Senator, and the many years of friendship before that. I want to thank Peter Hoagland, who came down from Washington with us today, for the years that we worked together when he was a Congressman from Nebraska.

I want to say to you that the best days of this country are still out here. We've had 8 good years, but if we build on it instead of reverse it, it's just going to get better.

But keep in mind, I will say again: It's more important that the people be pushing toward tomorrow than who has a particular

office. As long as we're open to the proposition we have to keep working; and we have to keep working together; everybody counts; everybody deserves a chance; we all do better when we work together. That's what the Democrats believe, and if we keep doing it, we're going to be just fine.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:38 p.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to Vinod Gupta and Laurel Gottesman, reception hosts; and Senator-elect Ben Nelson of Nebraska, and his wife, Diane. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

Statement on the Death of Representative Julian C. Dixon *December 8, 2000*

Hillary and I were deeply saddened to learn of the death of Congressman Julian Dixon. Julian was a champion for the people of his district, his State, and our Nation. In his 22 years in the United States Congress, Julian worked tirelessly for his district, served with distinction on the appropriations and intelligence committees, was a powerful advocate for the people of the District of Columbia, and worked hard to make sure that the voices of the less fortunate could always be heard. He was a kind, gentle man who earned the admiration and respect of all who knew him. I saw that recently when we visited a wonderful diner in his district together. I will miss him, and I join all Americans in honoring Julian Dixon for this lifetime of service to his country. Our thoughts and prayers are with his wife, Bettye, his son, Cary, his family and many friends.

NOTE: This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

The President's Radio Address *December 9, 2000*

Good morning. Eight years ago this week, I brought together leading minds from all around our country for my first economic summit. The challenge then was immediate and clear: The deficit was \$290 billion and rising; 10 million Americans were out of

work; interest rates were high; and confidence was low.

Al Gore and I were determined to change that by putting into action a new economic strategy, one of fiscal discipline, investment in our people, and expanded trade. Since then, we've turned record budget deficits into record surpluses and produced the longest economic expansion in American history, with more than 22 million new jobs, the lowest Hispanic and African-American unemployment ever, and the highest homeownership on record.

Over the last 2 years, our economy has grown at an exceptional pace, often achieving growth rates as high as 5 percent. Obviously, economic growth at such a brisk level cannot be sustained forever, but the bulk of evidence suggests that our recordbreaking expansion is continuing. In fact, just this week we received a report showing continued growth in private sector jobs. We also learned that unemployment in November was 4.0 percent, among the lowest rates in 30 years.

I'm also pleased to report that the overwhelming majority of private sector experts are predicting solid but measured growth in the coming year, with low unemployment, low inflation, and strong productivity. This is good news for the American economy and for the American people, and this is no time to abandon the path of fiscal discipline that helped get us here.

Our economic success was not a matter of chance; it was a matter of choice—a commitment to commonsense American values, to responsibility and fairness, to putting people first, to not spending what we don't have. We must not take our economic strengths for granted. That's why it is critical that we continue to pay down the debt, to keep inflation and interest rates low. That's why we should keep expanding trade, opening markets abroad, and keep investing in our people—that's the most important thing—closing the skills gap with more training and better education.

Education is an important part of any strategy for economic growth. And in this information age, it is essential. If we want our children to be able to compete in the high-tech, high-wage job market of the 21st cen-

tury, we must ensure that all of them have the skills they need to succeed.

With this in mind, I have met twice this week with congressional leaders of both parties to make sure we pass an education budget that prepares our children for the future. When Congress left town last month, we already had reached an historic bipartisan agreement on education. It would provide much-needed funding to reduce class size, repair crumbling schools, improve teacher quality. It would also expand Head Start, after-school programs, Pell grants, and support students with disabilities.

We know these are the basic building blocks of a 21st century work force. I hope Congress will keep its commitment to America's children and pass a balanced budget that makes education the number one priority.

Once President Lyndon Johnson said, "We must raise our sights to develop more completely our people's talents and to employ these talents fully." If we want to invest in the prosperity of our Nation, we must invest in the education of our children so that their talents may be fully employed. Working together, we can complete this year's unfinished business, keep paying down the debt, keep the prosperity going, and by investing in our children's education, prepare our Nation to meet the challenges of the years to come.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:10 a.m. from the Oval Office at the White House.

Remarks on the Unveiling of the Design for the William J. Clinton Presidential Library

December 9, 2000

Thank you very much. I want to begin by saying how glad I am to see all of you here. I want to thank my two Arkansas Cabinet members, Rodney Slater and James Lee Witt, for being here. And thank you, Skip Rutherford, for all the work you've done. And I want to thank the other Arkansans here who have tried to help us get this off the ground, including Mack McLarty and Joe Ford and all the local officials. And I want